

OUTREACH PROJECTS  
AT THE UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA ARCHIVES	
Accession No.	96-123
Item No.	156
Box No.	5



R. D. 11353  
TECHNOCRACY INC.  
9203S - 112 STREET  
EDMONTON, ALBERTA  
T6G 2C5

(4 Jan 78, est.)

Mr. Charles R. Shobe,  
Director, Program Development,  
Athabasca University,  
14515 - 122 Avenue,  
Edmonton, Alta. T5L 2W4

Your letter of 22 Dec 78.

Thank you for your letter of 22 Dec 77 detailing your response to my proposal for curriculum accommodation for the subject of Technocracy. It is noted that you will include it in possible future inter-disciplinary courses. We will be pleased to cooperate in any way possible.

May I be permitted to offer a correction in the classification you assign to this subject. It is not a philosophy, in the accepted meaning of that word. It was not philosophically conceived and is not guided in any sense by the subjective considerations of a pre-conceived 'philosophy'.

Technocracy is an operating technique for a high-energy industrial society - one in which an abundance of goods is produced, with a limited and decreasing participation by human labor. The means of production is extraneous energy. It is also the measure of production. There is no other such measure. It also provides the measure and control of purchasing power for consumables of individual choice, by the use of the Energy Certificate.

This arrangement is not in the nature of an objective of Technocracy; it is simply the recognition of the consequences of converting ever-larger amounts of extraneous energy to the operation of a continental-sized economy. A Price System based on exchange values and human labor cannot survive in such a situation. A metrical system for controlling supply and demand is required. 'Balancing' would be a better word than 'controlling'.

The transition from scarcity to abundance, from value to measurement, will be an historic event of the greatest magnitude. This transition is now in process, we think, in North America. The cultural consequences are almost beyond comprehension. Yet it is the logical consequence of relentlessly advancing science and technology.

An appreciation of historical processes usually occurs well after the events themselves, which are often submerged from immediate view by the accompanying turmoil and chaos of conflicting forces. The social change which is here contemplated is too vital, too critical for survival to allow it to develop by accident, even if it could. It must be predicted, preplanned and prepared. Your help in this endeavor would be 'priceless'.

Yours truly,  
N. END OF THE HUB  
U OF A CAMPUS

Walt Fryers.





14515-122 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
Canada T5L 2W4  
(403) 452-9990



## Athabasca University

December 22, 1977

Mr. Walter R. Fryers  
Technocracy, Inc.  
9203-112 St.  
Edmonton, Alberta.  
T6G 2C5.

Dear Mr. Fryer:

I have completed a review of the materials on Technocracy that you sent to me some time ago and regret that we are unable to consider incorporating them into our curriculum at this time.

At the moment, we are concentrating our efforts on establishing a curriculum base which will allow for future flexibility in our offerings and we are somewhat constrained by traditional considerations in that respect. As well, we might find ourselves in something of a dilemma if we began to develop courses which addressed specific socio-political philosophies. To present one would require us to address as many as possible in order to retain our objectivity and our development activities (and funds) suggest other priorities at this time.

Thank you for your interest in Athabasca University. I am certain that in interdisciplinary courses that we develop in the future in the areas of political science and social economics the Technocracy movement will be referred to along with other relevant political and social philosophies.

Sincerely,

Charles R. Shobe  
Director, Program Development.

CRS/cf

Recd 30 Dec 77.



R. D. 11353  
TECHNOCRACY INC.,  
EDMONTON ALTA.

3 August, 1977

Dr. Charles Shobe,  
Director of Program Development,  
Athabasca University,  
14515 - 122 Ave.,  
Edmonton, Alta.  
T5L 2W4

Dear Dr. Shobe:

In a telephone conversation with Mr. Nedza this date I made a proposal for a curriculum item for consideration by Athabasca University, specifically a presentation of the proposals of Technocracy for the social organization of a high-energy society.

Mr. Nedza recommended that I submit my suggestion, supported with explanatory material, to you, for consideration upon your return from vacation. I enclose a selection of literature on the subject.

Curriculum attention is being given to this subject in some parts of the continent in both Canada and the U.S., in both secondary and advanced institutions. Recognition of the significance of energy as a basic determinant of social organization is not yet general, although developments are moving rapidly in this direction. The end result, we submit, points to a Technocracy.

These times, you must surely agree, call for new departures and new concepts in keeping with the technological age in which we live. Technocracy is unique in offering just that: the application of science to society.

I would welcome an opportunity to discuss this suggestion further with you at your convenience. I will be on vacation for part of August. Otherwise I may be reached at my home at 11515 - 39 Ave., Edmonton; T6J 0M5, telephone 434 4496. Our office, in the HUB Mall, University of Alberta, is not regularly staffed as yet. (The phone number is 432 0344).

Yours truly,

Walter R. Fryers.

*Literature enclosed*

*TTSD*

*Energy cert.*

*Ecology*

*Hydrology*

*1st Briefs*



# EDMONTON ALTA

THE CITY OF EDMONTON, ALBERTA, HAS THE HONOUR TO ADVISE THAT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE PUBLIC:

1. The City of Edmonton is currently in the process of reviewing the City's financial position and the impact of the current economic conditions on the City's budget.

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*Elvira June 23 July 27*

*14515 - 122 Ave.*

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*15th 2004*

# Athabasca U is holding its own

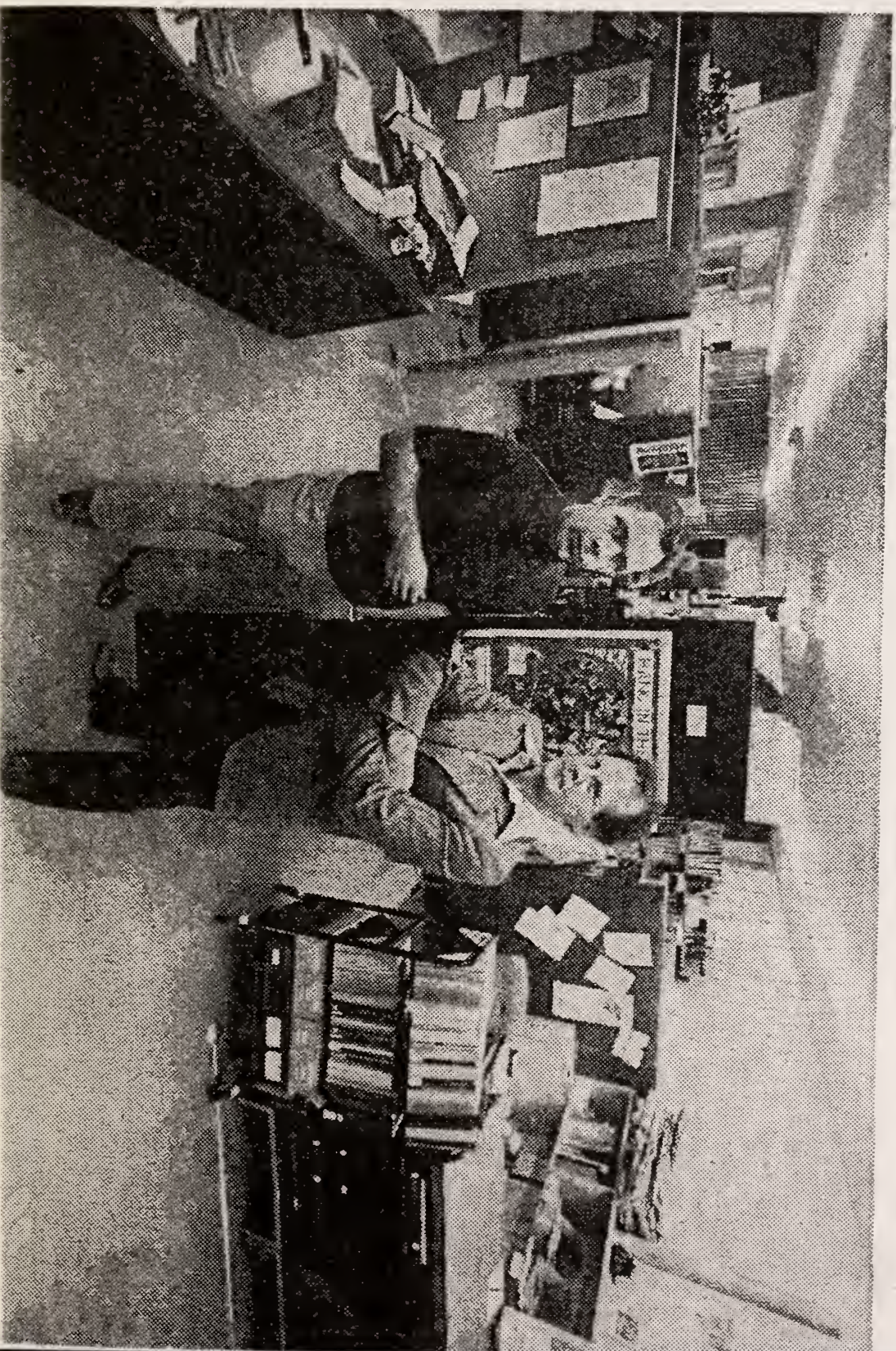
By HELEN MELNYK

Athabasca University faces a situation analogous to the corner green-grocer who has to compete with three food chain stores in the same neighborhood.

But like the smart small-time operator, the fledgling university has learned how to hold its own. If you can't attract customers with a wide selection of goods, then you offer them convenience.

Modelled after Britain's Open University, Athabasca caters to people who normally wouldn't go to university full-time. It offers a home-study program for the student who wants to learn on his own time and at his own pace. And it doesn't lay down the standard entrance requirements — a student simply has to prove he or she can do the work.

At a time when the Universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge show static or declining enrolments, Athabasca University is growing. Two years ago course registrations totalled 500, increased to 900 this year and according to estimates will rise to 1,000 next year.







Edmonton and Calgary with the rest scattered around the province. They study in their own homes from manuals, textbooks, tapes and lectures on community TV stations.

Athabasca University was conceived on a grand scale by the Social Credit government in 1970. It was to be located on a \$50 million campus near St. Albert with 10,000 students, as the fourth university in the province. But that was before the big drop in student enrolment at the established institutions and before the Tories rose to power in 1971.

The university came close to being closed down; at the time it seemed like the last thing the province needed was another university. To justify its existence, Athabasca came up with a bold new concept — rather than competing with the other universities, it would offer something completely different. It would offer a university education that would be available to any Albertan right in his own home. "Taking university out to the people," became Athabasca's new motto.

And in 1972, it was given three to five years to prove it could develop and deliver courses for home study and that there was a demand for such a program in Alberta.

The process of esta-

## Dr. Charles Shobe, director of program development, left, and Murray Richmond

blishing itself has been one of trial and error. "We had problems in spades during the pilot days," comments Murray Richmond, co-ordinator of teaching.

Students would enrol in courses only to discover there were no manuals and textbooks available. "Some of the studies were in the planning stage," explains Mr. Richmond. "We had to have something out but the students were penalized. It's not a problem now, however."

There were other problems too. Since no time limit was set for the courses, students often did not have the incentive to complete their assignments. The university's records were a nightmare since nobody knew how many students had dropped out and how many were still active.

In February the administration realized something had to be done. A one-year limit was set for completing courses and all the students were informed they would either have to make a commitment to finish or drop their registrations. This weeded down the number of students from 1,300 to 900.

The university also dis-

covered that many students dropped out because they felt isolated and became discouraged. "We thought people could work alone if the material was packaged slickly and attractively enough," says Dr. Sam Smith, the president. "But we recognized the need for some human interaction."

Thirty tutors were hired in the spring to correct assignments, and keep up contact with the students by phone and mail. Live lectures were set up in Fort McMurray, St. Paul and Lloydminster and discussion groups organized in other centres.

Introductory packages were offered for all the courses to allow students to see whether they liked the ones they'd chosen and whether they could do the work. Athabasca University passed the grade when the government passed a bill last spring giving it permanent status as a university.

The university is a year away from granting degrees. It's still waiting to hear from the department of advanced education whether it will be able to grant degrees for a Bachelor of General Studies. This would allow the university to piece together

different courses and credits students have picked up at various universities into an accredited degree.

This fall the university will be offering 15 courses from world ecology to accounting and the Italian renaissance. A special native studies program is being run at Blue Quills School in St. Paul. It's also considering more professional and applied studies with classes for correctional officers, child development workers, businessmen and nurses.

But its troubles are far from over as the university struggles to establish its credibility on a shoe-string budget of \$2.3 million. "We need about 18 times that amount of money," says Dr. Smith.

Tutors receive what amounts to token wages: \$5 a student per month with a guaranteed minimum of \$50. Dr. Felix Cherniavsky, a local tutor for the Italian renaissance course calls the wages "exploitive."

"Tutors end up working out of the goodness of their hearts," agrees Barbara Spronk, a St. Albert tutor in human communities with a masters degree in anthropology.

Low pay leads to poor

attitudes. Students like Debbie White, 23, dropped her psychology course and a 39-year-old student her computer course, discouraged because "tutors didn't seem too interested."

Students also do not have access to books other than their texts. Athabasca's library is limited to 4,000 volumes, films, slides and tapes. This means students prepare assignments and essays without the outside reading required by other universities.

The lack of adequate library facilities has been one of the strongest arguments put forward for amalgamating the university with U of A's extension faculty. The extension library owns 90,000 volumes in comparison.

Dr. Smith responds that the university is completing a "more formal arrangement" with the extension library to allow students access to its books.

Dr. Smith also sees Athabasca University as riding the crest on the new wave of education. The trend is towards part-time attendance at university, he says. Education is becoming a life-long learning process with people study-

ing without leaving their jobs.

"I deny the notion that a person has to sit on campus for three years to be stamped with the seal of learning," he says.

There is also some apprehension that the university may turn into a degree mill to increase its enrolment and funding. "There is the danger it may become a pass-you-pay institution," says a staff member. "The concern may shift to quantity rather than quality. There may be the temptation to pass a lot of students to get their numbers high."

But Dr. Smith says, "It's just not happening. We're proudful about our standards and our materials are there to be examined for their quality and content. In most conventional institutions, what an instructor does disappears into students' notebooks."

Athabasca University may remain as a pilot project for a long time, says Dr. Charles Shobe, director of program development.

In the meantime, the administration is anxiously waiting to see how well students do in more advanced courses at other institutions.



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山田	花子	女		30		主婦		大学		150万		夫婦			
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高橋	三郎	男		50		会社員		大学		350万		夫婦			
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